GrassRoots Institute, Inc.

LATIN Dance

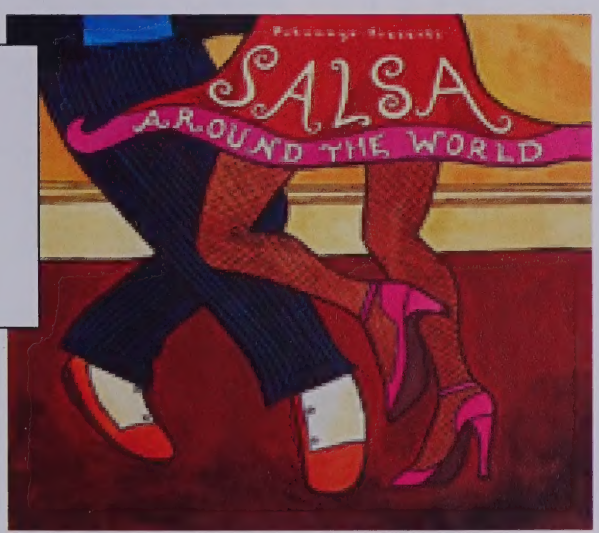
FUNDRAISER

Date: SAT, OCT 11, 2003
Time: 7pm
Where: STUDIOPLEX On Auburn
659 Auburn Avenue NE
Location: Outdoor

Baile!

Every Body dance to the Latin Beat, let your body feel the Heat, move your hips, now you're groovin' to the Latin Beat...

Donation: $15.00
Grass Roots Institute, Inc.
659 Auburn Avenue NE
Suite G5
Atlanta, GA 30312



Proceeds to benefit:

GRASS ROOTS INSTITUTE

(A non-profit organization, 501c3)
Your Contribution is tax deductible.

Samba

Merengue, **Salsa**, Cha Cha, Mambo....

Grass Roots Institute participants during a visit to Puerto Rico.

The mission of the Grass Roots Institute is to provide an environment in which all students can learn the skills to become caring and productive individuals.

Founded in 2002, Grass Roots Institute, Inc. is a non-profit 501C-3 community organization working to provide young people of culturally diverse backgrounds the chance express their creativity and to participate in extraordinary experiences that educate, challenge and inspire.

Grass Roots began in the heart of Atlanta's Martin Luther King Jr. Historic District with Aida Rentas and her desire to take care of her community. Aida's passion, commitment and love have since united hundreds of volunteers, educators, artists, students, families and friends.

"We are working to improve the quality of life of for our children and to prepare them for success in life by giving them access to the arts; offering education about healthy living, etiquette and goal setting,and by providing mentoring and tutoring. We are building a stronger community, a better Atlanta, one child, one mother, one volunteer at a time."

Over the past five years, Grass Roots has offered a variety of free and subsidized classes in everything from poetry and photography to video production, music and quilting. Tutoring has been available in reading, writing, math, science, languages and computer skills. Family workshops have been presented on health awareness, nutrition and conflict resolution.

Thanks to Founder Aida Rentas and a team of community volunteers, Grass Roots is providing a dynamic, safe environment for young people, ages 6-14, to gather and be supported.

THE GRASS ROOTS INSTITUTE YOUTH AND COMMUNITY RETREAT

Understanding the power of nature to strengthen respect, trust, responsibility, cooperation and appreciation, The Grass Roots Institute is launching a campaign to build a 4,500 square foot community center in the pristine wilderness at Sassafras Ridge Mountain Retreat in Turtletown, Tennessee. This community retreat will allow Atlanta youth to experience the beauty, serenity and joy of nature first hand – from hiking to gardening, from fishing to canoeing.

Sassafras Ridge Mountain is a unique community nestled between two national forests and situated atop the magnificent Blue Ridge Mountains of Southeastern Tennessee. The area has over 40 springs, roaring streams, miles of flowering trails and two spring-fed lakes as well as a natural oasis known as the Harriet Tubman Nature Reserve.

Nestled in the upper slopes "Wildflower Fields" region, The Retreat will feature a Frank Lloyd Wright inspired design that will includes a two-story community room with a raised hearth fireplace, a gallery to display the artwork of Grass Roots artists, five bedrooms and a spacious deck that will offer breathtaking Blue Ridge views.

Exploring the Harriet Tubman Nature Reserve.

You can be a part of this grassroots effort to bring cool breezes, starry nights and spring flowers to our children. With your help, we can share the beauty of nature with those eager to receive it.

"I want to wake up in the mountains and not hear the city but just the quiet. I want to know what that's like," states a Grass Roots student. "I have never been fishing but want to. I have never been to the mountains but they look good on TV," remarks another participant, " I want to see it for myself!"

YOUTHBUILD JOINS THE GRASSROOTS INSTITUTE CAMPAIGN!

YOUTHBUILD, a program of the Community Housing Resource Center, has become a major partner with the Grassroots Institute. This program that trains young people in the building trades has chosen the construction of the Grassroots mountain retreat as one of their 2008-2009 projects.

Whitewater rafting on the Olympic Ocoee River.

Grass Roots Institute, Inc. has been funded since our inception through monthly contributions from individuals and sales of arts and crafts at our Edgewood Avenue center.

Grass Roots Institute, Inc. is a non-profit, 501C-3 organization and all contributions are tax-deductible.

A CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT

Please Make Your Donation Today!

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Amount Of Donation (Please Check Box):

☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $500 ☐ $1,000 ☐ Other_____

Method of payment:

Credit Card ☐ _____

Cash ☐

Check ☐

(Please make check payable to Grass Roots Institute, Inc)

GrassRoots Institute, Inc.

660 Erwin Street, SE . Atlanta, Georgia 30312

Photo • Aida Rentas after a blessing and dedication at the site of the retreat.

"We value young people and believe they can transform our world and make it a better place to live. At Grass Roots, we embrace and celebrate the uniqueness of each student, their imagination, candor and creativity. Young people will build bridges and connect us with diverse cultures and communities."

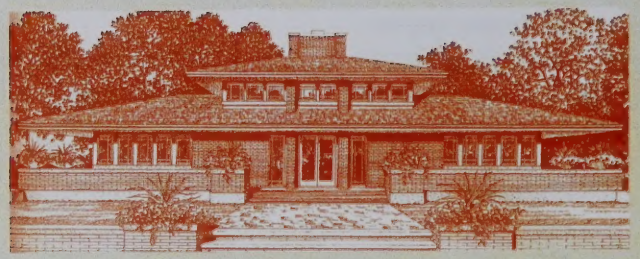
—Aida Rentas, founder of Grass Roots

404.524.9578

www.grassrootsinst.net

A CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT THE GRASS ROOTS INSTITUTE

YOUTH AND COMMUNITY RETREAT



YOU TEACH A LITTLE BY WHAT YOU SAY.
YOU TEACH THE MOST BY WHO YOU ARE!

At Sassafras Ridge Mountain Retreat
...Between Two National Forests
In Turtletown, Tennessee!

LOCATION AGREEMENT
(Unpaid Makeover of Property)

Date: 02/17/07

To: Aida Rentas- Grassroots Institute
593A Edgewood Ave
Atlanta, GA 30312
[NAME AND ADDRESS OF PROPERTY OWNER]

Re: A television interstitial program entitled "Movie & A Makeover" (the "Program")
Program Show Title: "Dangerous Minds"

Ladies and Gentlemen:

This will confirm the agreement ("Agreement") between Aida Rentas- Grassroots Inst. ("Owner") and Superstation, Inc. ("Producer"), with respect to Producer's refurbishment, renovation, alteration, improvement (collectively, the "makeover") and use of Owner's property (the "Premises") located at 593 A Edgewood Ave. Atlanta, GA 30312, in connection with the Program, as follows:

1. Rights Granted: For good and adequate consideration, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, Owner hereby grants to Producer the right to photograph, make recordings of and on, and otherwise enter, makeover and use the Premises for and in connection with the Program and any other television production or any other production as Producer determines, and to exhibit, advertise and exploit such photographs and recordings in any manner whatsoever, and in all media whether now known or hereafter devised, at any time in perpetuity throughout the universe. Without limiting the foregoing, Producer shall have the right to bring personnel, equipment, facades, props and effects, of any kind and nature, onto the Premises and to remove same; and to use and refer to the name, address and identification (such as, without limitation, signs, business name, etc.) of the Premises visually and/or in dialogue, to attribute fictional events and/or characters to the Premises and/or to change and/or fictionalize the name, address and/or identification of the Premises, as Producer shall determine in its sole discretion. Owner hereby acknowledges and agrees that Owner has no right or interest whatsoever in any photography or recording of the Premises or any results and proceeds of Producer's use of the Premises. As used herein, "Premises" includes all interior and exterior areas of the Premises and all personal property located in, on and/or about the Premises.

2. Term: Owner agrees that Producer shall have exclusive possession of the Premises commencing on or about 02/19/07 and continuing until 02/23/07 (the "Term"). If, because of the illness or unavailability of any Producer personnel, weather conditions or any other occurrence beyond Producer's control, Producer is unable to proceed with the development, pre-production or production of the Program at any time during the

Term, Producer shall have the right to extend the Term or to use the Premises at a later date to be mutually agreed upon with Owner.

3. Assumption of Liability; Release and Waiver:

(a) Owner acknowledges and agrees that Producer makes no warranties, representations, assurances, guarantees or claims as to the makeover, including without limitation, with respect to the quality of the work performed. Furthermore, Owner acknowledges and agrees that it/he/she will assume of risk of damage or loss in connection with the makeover. Owner, its successors, licensees and assigns, hereby irrevocably and unconditionally release, acquit and forever discharge Producer, its affiliates, parent, directors, officers, agents, employees, licensees and successors from any and all claims, actions, losses, liabilities, obligations, costs, damages and expenses of any nature whatsoever, known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, arising out of or in connection with the makeover and/or Producer's use of the Premises hereunder.

(b) Owner acknowledges that he/she/it is aware that it may hereafter discover claims or facts different from or in addition to those they now know or believe to be true with respect to the matters herein released, and it agrees that this release shall be and remain in effect in all respects a complete general release as to the matters released and all claims relative thereto which may exist or may heretofore have existed. **[Use the following only if location is in California, otherwise delete language in the brackets and the brackets-** I acknowledge that I have been informed of Section 1542 of the Civil Code of the State of California and do hereby expressly waive and relinquish all rights and benefits which it has or may have under Section 1542, which reads as follows: *"A general release does not extend to claims which the creditor does not know or suspect to exist in his favor at the time of executing the release, which if known by him must have materially affected his settlement with the debtor."***]**

4. No Injunctive Relief: In the event that Producer is in breach of any provision of this Agreement and/or any other agreement entered into by Producer and Owner, Owner specifically acknowledges and agrees that the damage, if any, caused thereby will not be irreparable or otherwise sufficient to entitle Owner to injunctive or any other form of equitable relief. Owner's rights and remedies in any such event shall be strictly limited to the right to recover monetary damages, if any, in an action at law. Without limiting the foregoing, Owner shall not be entitled by reason of any such breach to terminate or rescind this Agreement nor to enjoin, restrain or otherwise impair Producer's exercise of any of the rights and privileges granted or to be granted to Producer hereunder, nor to restrain, enjoin or otherwise impair Producer's property or assets or the development, production, exhibition and/or exploitation of the Program or any advertising, publicity or promotion in connection therewith.

5. Owner's Representations: Owner hereby represents and warrants that Owner is the sole owner or the authorized representative of the sole owner of the Premises and has the sole authority to grant Producer the rights herein granted. Owner hereby agrees to indemnify Producer, its parent, subsidiary and affiliated entities, and its and their respective employees, directors, officers, agents, assigns and licensees, from and against any and all claims, liabilities, obligations, costs, damages and expenses including, without limitation, reasonable attorneys'

fees and court costs (including without limitation, attorneys' fees, costs and expenses) arising from any breach or alleged breach of the foregoing representation and warranty.

6. No Obligation to Use: Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement, Producer shall have no obligation to use the Premises or to include the Premises in the Program, or to produce, release, distribute or otherwise exploit the Program.

7. Assignment: This Agreement may be freely assigned and licensed by Producer, and in the event of any such assignment or license, this Agreement shall remain binding on Owner and shall inure to the benefit of any such licensee or assignee.

8. Promotion: Owner affirms that no one acting for Owner gave or agreed to give anything of value to Producer, to any member of the production staff, to anyone associated with the Program or the network broadcasting the Program or to anyone else for mentioning Owner's name or the name of the Premises in the Program. Owner further acknowledges that it is a Federal offense, unless disclosed prior to broadcast, to give or agree to give anything of value to promote any product, service, or venture on the air and Owner agrees to notify Producer immediately in writing if any person attempts to induce Owner to violate the foregoing.

9. Entire Understanding: This Agreement sets forth the entire understanding of Owner and Producer and may not be changed except by a written agreement signed by the party to be changed. Owner acknowledges that Owner has not been induced to enter into this Agreement by any representation or promise not contained herein.

Very truly yours,

SUPERSTATION, INC.

Signature: Aida
Name: _____
Title: _____

ACCEPTED AND AGREED TO:

(type Owner name here)
AIDA M. RENTAS

Signature: Aida M Rentas
Title: Executive Director

TBS "MOVIE & A MAKEOVER"
"Dangerous Minds" -PRODUCTION SCHEDULE - REMOTE-Day1

CREW CALL 7:00 AM

DATES: Tuesday, February 20, 2007

MOVIE: Dangerous Minds

THEME: Classroom Makeover

Air Date: April 28, 2007

ADDRESS: 593A Edgewood Ave.
Atlanta, GA 30312

DIRECTIONS: From Turner to Location:
Turn LEFT onto 10th St.
Turn RIGHT on to 75/85 South (7.6m)
Merge onto Freedom Pkwy. E- 248C
Turn RIGHT on Boulevard
Turn LEFT on Irwin St.
Turn RIGHT on Randolph St. NE
Turn RIGHT on Edgewood Ave.

CREW: *TBS Crew:*
Rhonda Guthrie, Field Producer, c. 404.229.2686, rhonda2609@bellsouth.net
Mandy McCowan, Production Coordinator, c. 770.364.6018, mandy.mccowan@turner.com
John McCurry, DP, 770.683.7599, indianajohn@mindspring.com
Drew Ponder, Audio, 404.281.9950, pondersound@bellsouth.net
Jamillah Simmons, MakeUp, 404.660.0380, Jamillah.simmons@turner.com
Damian Dunn, Production Assistant, c.678.438.2389, damian.dunn@gmail.com
Scott Balzer, Production Assistant, c.251.209.3291, scott.balzer@turner.com
Jackie Walker, Production Assistant, c. 412.901.3339, o.404.575.6821, Jackie.walker@turner.com O/C
Ashley Evans, Supervising Producer, c.404.273.2709, aecreative@bellsouth.net O/C
Julie Bitton, Production Manager, c. 678.362.6305 o. 404.885.0076, Julie.bitton@turner.com O/C
Kris Johnson, Post Supervisor, c. 404.307.4231, kris.johnson@turner.com O/C

Update by jb 2/19/07

TBS "MOVIE & A MAKEOVER"
"Dangerous Minds" -PRODUCTION SCHEDULE - REMOTE-Day1

RECIPIENT: Grassroots Institute, Aida Rentas c. 404.372.7199

EXPERT: Brian Patrick Flynn, c. 404.307.9858, brian.flynn@turner.com
Carpenter: David Cloak, c. 404.797.5896, david.cloak@gmail.com
Assist: Krystee Manifold, c.678.438.5533,
krystee.manifold@gmail.com

Production NOTES:

- Tape stock for camera provided by TBS
- Shoot Non-drop frame
- DV camera/Audio
- Walking courtesy breakfast and lunch provided by production
- Kids to arrive on location at 8am
- Allied Contracting Services to arrive at 1pm. Contact: Tara o. 770.392.4227
- Please no high heels on location. Rubber soles preferred.
- Crawford Long Hospital
  404.686.2435

February 20, 2007
CREW CALL:- 7:00 AM

7:00 AM	Arrive and set up
7:30 AM	Before shots w/out kids
8:15 AM	B roll w/ kids and Aida in space - (Wisk B roll- finger painting and clay)
9:30 AM	Clear out
10:30 AM	Interview w/Aida
12:00 PM	Lunch
12:45 PM	painting b roll
1:15 PM	B roll (possible time lapse) Brian puts down Flor
2:00 PM	SOT BPF tip - transient flooring
2:30 PM	more painting b roll

Update by jb 2/19/07

3:00 PM	B roll David changing light fixtures
3:30 PM	B roll David installs Rectangular shaped activity table
4:00 PM	SOT BPF tip about using reclaimed wood
4:30 PM	B roll BPF and Krystee stain table, paint table legs
5:00 PM	Any other project b roll
5:30 PM	Wrap

SHOW STRUCTURE:
6 break movie
Dangerous Minds

Recip- Grassroots Institute : After school program for at risk youth here in ATL
Deserving Classroom Makeover

d1 1:00 Mia talks thru Aida and Grassroots Story (deserving.. so we DO NOT need Aida pleading for help)
e1 :05 grfx

d2 1:30 overall - Mia tosses to :45 gameplan from BF scoping out space, doing GP to cam
e2 HOLD FOR :35 webspot or sponsor TBD

d3 1:55 overall- Mia tosses to 1:15 phase one (mostly clearing out, painting starts (tradeout), Flor)
e3 :05 grfx

d4 1:55 overall- Mia tosses to 1:30 phase two (furniture talk/painting/making it + storage and lighting)
e4 :40 Mia in studio **WISK spotlight**

d5 1:45 overall- Mia tosses to 1:30 phase three (Ikea PC Load in, drapes, signage up, finishing touches)
e5 :45 Mia tease makeover reveal coming up and process thus far (remind deserving angle!!!)- PC billboard on end

d6 1:30 overall - REVEAL appx 1:10, before/afters - Aida reactions, BF interview etc..
e6 1:00 Mia wrap up show, tease next week's makeover Corinna, Corinna (putting best foot forward w/ house re-sale)

GrassRoots Institute, Inc.

593 Edgewood Avenue Atlanta, GA 30312 404.659.2929 404.372.7199 www.grassrootsinst.net

Grass Roots Institute, Inc. History

GRASS ROOTS INSTITUTE, INC. was established in 2002 by Aida Rentas. Affectionately known as Ms. Aida, former volunteer coordinator for the National Black Arts Festival and The Names Project, uses her extensive experience with obtaining volunteers and coordinating local and regional events to benefit Atlanta's children. Grass Roots, a nonprofit 501(c)3, offers extraordinary experiences that educate, challenge and inspire to culturally diverse young people.

Her vision is to support youth by providing a venue for their creative expression. As Rentas and Grass Roots Institute move forward to transform their lives by broadening their experiences through enlightening classes, seminars and cultural trips, she is able to strengthen their self-esteem and intellect.

"We value young people and believe they can transform our world and make it a better place to live. We embrace and celebrate the uniqueness of each student's imagination, candor and creativity."

2006 Summer Program

AS GRASS ROOTS PREPARES for its 2006 summer program, it requests the assistance of the metro-Atlanta community. The participants of the summer class will embark on a memorable trip to Puerto Rico! The class and its accompanying chaperones will travel to from August 9 through August 13, 2006 as they visit Vieques, Old San Juan, the rain forest and Luquillo beach. Prior to the trip, each prospective traveler must take courses on Spanish, the rain forest and Puerto Rican history.

Grass Roots is in the process of forming a capital committee and a board of directors. Applications will soon be available for interested individuals who would like to bring their educational, professional, cultural experiences to Grass Roots Institute. The board of directors will be a "working board" that consists of twelve members.

Goals

Grass Roots promotes academic excellence through tutoring and an enhanced quality of life through workshops that focus on etiquette, health awareness, nutrition, goal setting and non-traditional trades.

Events

- Aug 7-11th
  Trip to Puerto Rico
-

Q&A with Ms. Aida

Q: Tell me where you're from, where your from and why you started Grass Roots.

A: I am from Puerto Rico. I lived in New York for 35 years and I decided that I would find a place that was less expensive. So I looked around at a few places: California, Denver and I ended up in Atlanta and I love it – I've been here 15 years. I am 68, so as I was headed toward retirement I kept thinking 'what do I want to do?' Because so many gave to me when I was young, I thought I would like to work with children but not your traditional stuff. I wanted to prepare them for life.

So many people have degrees but they can't get a job. They go to college and come out looking for a job. I think if you're going to pay $50,000, you should have a career. So I'm trying to make them aware of the difference between a job and a career through the arts and addressing issues like health, establishing hands-on skills and family concerns. I didn't want to overwork them – I didn't want to have classes during the time they were in school or when they had homework. So we came up with spring, summer and weekends. But now that I am retired, I'm looking at expanding the programming. Since this is our fifth year, people come with programming, we just got a music program and we're going to offer that for two weeks in July.

Q: How many children are in each class?

A: The ideal group is 15

Q: What's the ideal age?

A: The ideal age group is between 8 and 13.

Q: What did the children do each day in the 2006 spring break class?

A: The last spring break class' curriculum was health but they don't want to hear about health so we disguised it as a newsroom. The idea was that they were going to learn how to film and to be reporters and whoever was the best was going to be the anchor. They were going to be reporting on AIDS, diabetes and obesity. So one day we talked about the media and how it works and then they each picked what they wanted to be. The next day, we showed them what those people do and we had a test run. The third day, they did the actual production rehearsal. The fourth day, we took a break because they were working on getting their information at home. So we did a garden, which has to do with health. We showed them how organically grown and fresh grown is better than canned, what vegetables are and why herbs are good. That was Thursday and Friday was graduation. We had a couple of doctors from the CDC come Friday morning and take their body mass and tell them the correlation between health and exercise. And then the parents came and they were able to rehearse the newsroom for them. Each of them went home with a videotape so that each time they show it they'll be educating someone.

Q: What type of feedback did you receive from the children and the parents?

A: The parents can't believe how much the children learned. The children keep calling me because they were supposed to come in and water the garden and they haven't. They ask 'Ms. Aida, did you water the garden?' But they are supposed to be researching the herbs so that when all the herbs are planted and grown, we have a chef that's going to come and cook for them and use the

herbs that they grew. A funny story is that they were supposed to be researching rosemary, so this kid calls me and says, 'I can't find her.' I asked who he was looking for and he says rosemary! So when we did the garden there was one boy who loved gardening and he decided he wants a lawn business. He started doing the lawns in his community. We have people that come in here and when they find out what we can do, they tell us what they can do. I'm really excited because recently we met an aeronautics engineer who's off every other Friday and he's willing to come in and create model airplanes because that's how he became interested in aeronautics. We also do jewelry making and crocheting.

Q: What is the registration process for the classes?
A: Depending on the program, we usually charge $100 per week for five days from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., which includes food and materials.

Q: Are the classes primarily offered to children in the neighborhood?
A: No, if the parents bring them that's fine. We do try to enroll the kids in the neighborhood because they're here, but we accept anybody. We send out flyers and the first 15 that register – it's first come, first serve.

Q: How have you seen the classes improve over the last five years?
A: I think when it started it was more recreational. We did more games and arts and crafts, but now we're promoting more entrepreneurial thinking and life efficient decision making. 'Do you understand that you have eight years before you're out on your own?' As opposed to just keeping them busy, we're making them think. We don't deal with math and science – hopefully the schools are doing that. We deal with the person, the personality. Is this child being talked to? Does he/she need a mentor? If they are in a single mom household, can we get a man in this kid's life? And vise versa.

Q: What inspired you to become so involved with children?
A: I was the volunteer coordinator for the National Black Arts Festival for many years and single parents would come with a child to volunteer. I would have to say, 'You can't volunteer with your child. You have to leave them somewhere.' They would respond, 'There's no where to leave them.' Either they could afford the programs or they weren't available at the time the parents needed them and that happened enough that I thought, 'Wow, I thought there was programming out there to take care of these parents and children.' I also started noticing that the artists were sitting around waiting to go on and I would ask them to stay with the children for two hours while their parents were volunteering and to teach the kids how they became a musician, an artist and who inspired them. The artists at first were like 'Okay, we'll try it.' And now I get more artists than I need. More people are offering services from sewing to attorneys who are willing to take the kids to court. Just let them see something other than basketball and baseball.

Q: Tell me about the store.
A: In the beginning, it wasn't a formal program, even though it's a 501©3. I really didn't like writing grants because then you need to hire people to administer the program and all your money goes into salaries. We're all volunteers. So how were we going to raise money when we moved to a space because it was hard to just run on donations? We started displaying the artists' work and getting 35 percent of the artists' sales when the classes were not in session. We don't have classes often enough to warrant having an empty space but we didn't want to loose our venue because we knew once we needed we'd have it. So it works really good and now we're moving our teachers in-house, which I never even thought of but it's just great. The lady who's going to teach modeling is moving in-house. The jeweler's moving in-house. So they have a real vested interest in helping the children.

Q: Explain your plans to take the 2006 summer class to Puerto Rico.
A: The trip to Puerto Rico is scheduled from August 7-11. It is $1,200 including everything. We're going to the rain forest, the beach, Vieques, the fortresses just filled with history and culture. These kids have never left Atlanta and they're to see an island with natural resources. But I never realized that $1,200 is a lot of money for single moms. So we're having to go really heavy into fundraising mode to help them raise $1,200. We're looking forward to it. We have a park ranger who knows CPR going with us.

Q: What's your overall vision for Grass Roots Institute? Where do you project the institute in 10 years?
A: With its own building with in-house teachers teaching life skills. With a computer bank, a wood shop, teaching the arts and entrepreneurial skills as well as relationships and rites of passage.

GrassRoots Institute, Inc.

Grass Roots Institute, Inc.
593 Edgewood Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30312

New book unmasks Clarence Thomas

by George E. Curry

Anyone who has followed my career knows how I feel about **Clarence Thomas**. In fact, **Jack E. White**, writing in *Time* magazine, said, "No matter what **George Curry** accomplishes during the remainder of his journalistic career, he will be remembered for one thing: he was the editor who slapped a portrait of Clarence Thomas wearing an Aunt Jemima-style handkerchief on a 1993 cover of *Emerge* magazine."

White continued, "That shocking image outraged Thomas supporters, of course, but it crystallized the disgust that many African Americans had begun to feel about the ultra-conservative legal philosophy of the U.S. Supreme Court's only Black member."

Given my view of Thomas, I never thought I'd want to read a book on the supreme prick from Pinpoint, Ga. However, I resisted the urge and this week read *Supreme Discomfort: The Divided Soul of Clarence Thomas*. The only reason I read the book was because it was written by **Kevin Merida** and **Michael A. Fletcher**, two friends who work at the *Washington Post*. They have done a superb job describing the many contradictions of Clarence Thomas.

After reading the book, I have one regret about that famous *Emerge* cover. If I had an opportunity to do it over, I would tie the Aunt Jemima knot tighter.

While criticizing African-Americans for embracing "victimhood," the book portrays Thomas as the ultimate professional victim, at every turn claiming that people didn't like him because of his dark skin, his broad lips, or his conservative ideology. Recounting a 1998 speech before the National Bar Association, the authors note, "In remarks that veered from self-pity to combative, he maintained that the 'principal problem' he faces could be summed up in one succinct sentence: 'I have no right to think the way I do because I am Black.'"

As the late Appeals Court Justice **A. Leon Higginbotham** pointed out at the time, "He's got a right to think whatever he wants to, but he does not have a right to be free of critique."

And a critique of Thomas shows that while professing to oppose special treatment because of his race, every job he has held, includ-

Aida Rentas-

Champion of the Week

At 68, **Aida Rentas** has learned that a life of complacency and idleness is not the life for her. After retiring as a financial analyst some years ago, she determined that her free schedule would be filled with meaningful and purposeful work.

After moving to Atlanta in 1992, she joined a myriad of organizations and took on leadership roles in almost all of them. Having served for many years as the volunteer coordinator for the National Black Arts Council and outreach coordinator for The Names Project (The AIDS Memorial Quilt), she is currently the volunteer coordinator for Mayor **Shirley Franklin**.

But perhaps her greatest achievement is her most recent endeavor. The oldest of seven kids, Rentas always knew that working with children would give her great satisfaction. So in 2002, she founded the Grassroots Institute, a nonprofit organization located on Edgewood Ave that is especially geared toward children of single parents. Rentas encourages these children to express themselves through art and creativity by providing programming in such areas as music, photography and jewelry making, to name a few.

Classes and programs are offered in the spring and summer, and every June, Rentas offers a one-week program free of charge to parents who can't afford the price of summer camp. The Grassroots Institute does not get public funding but rather relies on donations from businesses and people in the community. Rentas said she believes it is the responsibility of the community to support local programs.

In her spare time, Rentas enjoys reading and painting in the apartment she recently purchased right next to the organization. Though much of her free time is spent planning new programs for the kids, she doesn't mind devoting extra time and care, especially after getting feedback directly from the children.

"There is no greater feeling than when a child says 'I love you, thank you,'" Rentas said. "It makes me feel so good."

If you would like to nominate someone to be considered as a future Champion of the Week, please contact ***Kathy Mitchell*** *at kathy@dekalbchamp.com or at 404-373-7779, ext. 104.*

Grass Roots Institute grows good kids

Non-profit holds free camp

by Ashley Wilson
Ashley@dekalbchamp.com

It's a typical day at the Grass Roots Institute and by afternoon, 8-year-old **Innana Dabrev-McClain** has already built and colored a paper kite, participated in an improvisation game, eaten lunch, practiced her lines for a play she will soon perform for her parents and learned how to knit.

This is after spending yesterday morning decorating a wooden cutout of herself, crafting a purse made out of recycled materials and getting dance instruction during the afternoon.

McClain's parents are not paying hundreds of dollars for these creative lessons. In fact, they're paying nothing at all.

This is made possible by **Aida Rentas**, the founder of the Grass Roots Institute, a non-profit organization that offers weeklong summer camps free of charge to disadvantaged youths and children of single parents. The organization also holds camps during the spring when the children are on spring break.

The oldest of seven children, Rentas always knew she wanted to work with kids. Before moving to Atlanta in 1992, she was a financial analyst in New York City for many years. After deciding to leave corporate America, she became heavily involved in various volunteer organizations around the city, serving on the founding board for the Georgia Equality Project and becoming volunteer coordinator for the National Black Arts Festival. She later became outreach coordinator for The NAMES Project (AIDS Memorial Quilt) and currently serves as the volunteer coordinator for Mayor **Shirley Franklin**.

Situated in a renovated loft space on Edgewood Avenue, in Atlanta, the Grass Roots Institute is what Rentas is primarily focused on these days. Founded in 2002, this organization was not only her way of giving back to a community that had served her well over the years, but also a chance for the 68-year-old to continue doing what she loved most–helping others–while slowly settling into retirement. She wanted to meet the needs of children of single parents because she felt they could benefit from the extra hands-on attention that the camp provides.

Working with the children can be time-consuming and exhausting, but Rentas is committed to bettering their lives any way that she can, she said. When the camps are not in session, she spends her time brainstorming for new activities that she can bring to the children. From jewelry making, to painting, to gardening, few creative pursuits are off limits.

"I didn't realize when I started [the Grass Roots Institute] that there aren't programs for these children. And the parents don't always have a lot of time to spend with these kids because they're working," Rentas said. "This exposes them to new things."

Rentas doesn't do all of this alone. She has many teenage volunteers, some of whom return year after year, that come during the camp week to help Rentas supervise the youngsters. **Spencer Hooper**, a 17-year-old from Delaware, spends his summers in Atlanta and always makes a point to volunteer at Grass Roots.

"Before coming here, I didn't really like little kids. Now I love them. The atmosphere of everyone loving each other is great," Hooper said. "I'll be back next summer."

The institute relies solely on donations within the community for funding, rather than the government. Rentas believes it is the responsibility of the community to support local businesses. The instructors who teach the kids usually offer their services for free and, in return, Rentas displays their artwork in the loft. As a result, the walls and floors are a colorful and eclectic array of many different items, all of which are for sale.

Innana has been coming to the Grass Roots Institute for four years now and it's one of her favorite parts of summer. She looks forward to meeting new people and seeing "Ms. Aida," she said.

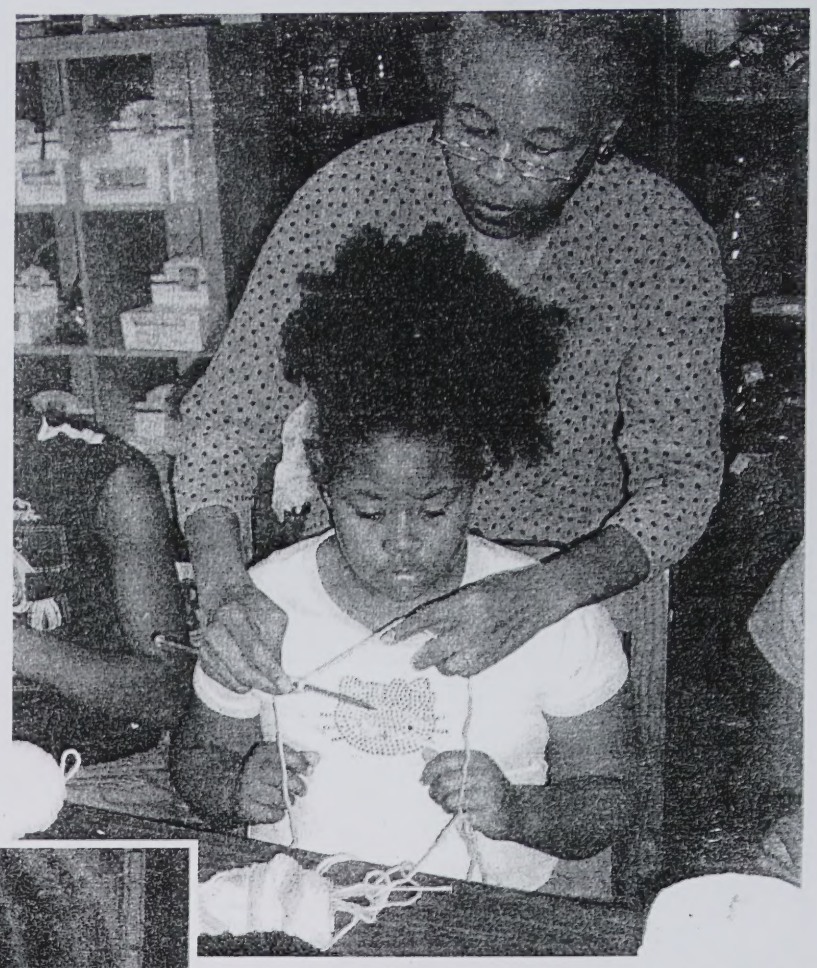
"Ms. Aida is so nice, and she always takes care of us and supports us. And she takes us on trips and give us food and candy and it's real fun," Innana said.

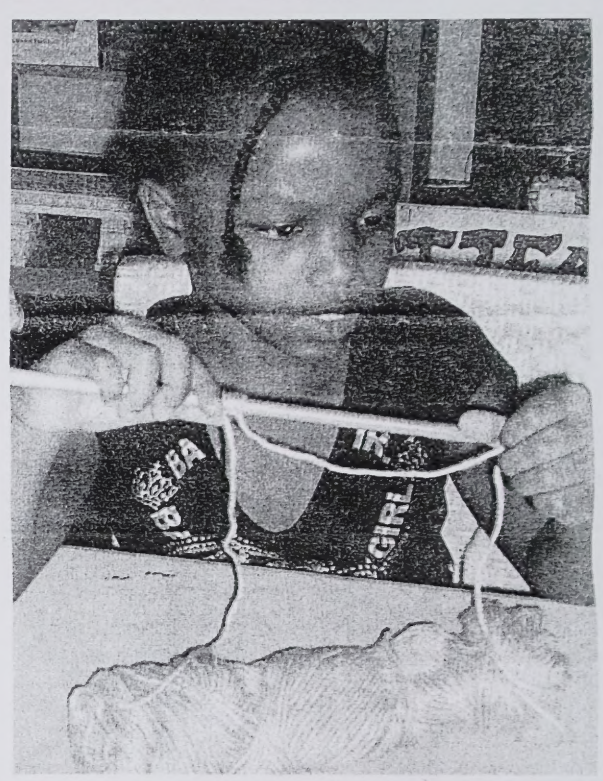
For Rentas, it's the positive feedback she receives from the children that is so rewarding.

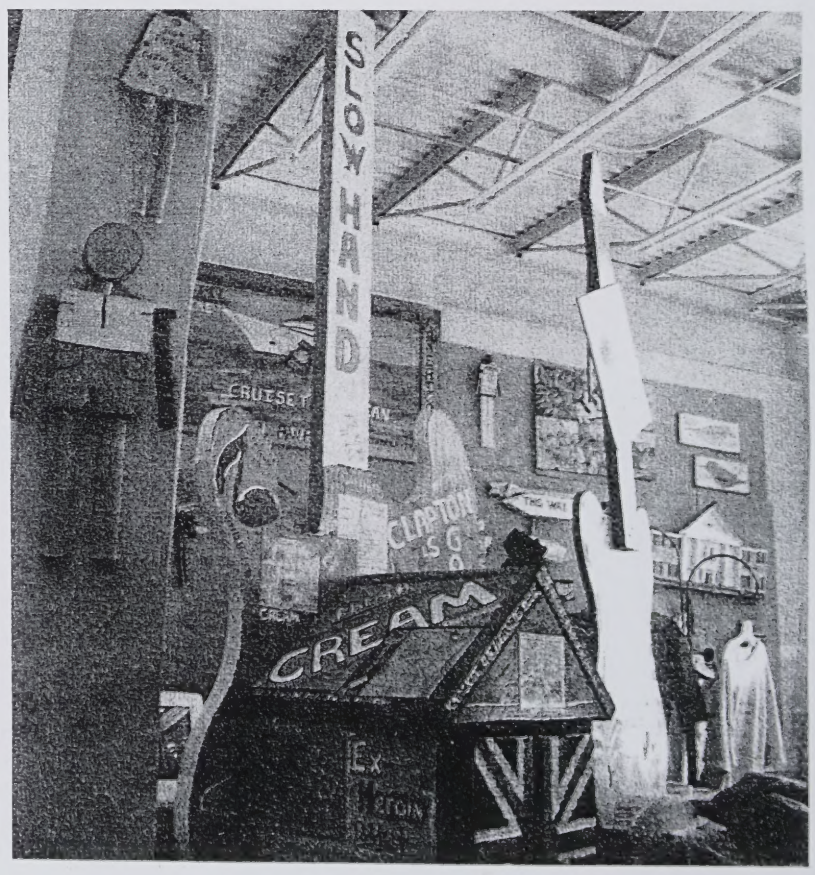
"There is just no greater feeling than when a child says 'I love you, thank you.' It makes me feel so good," Rentas said.

Rentas recently bought five acres of land in Tennessee to build a youth retreat center and she hopes to take the kids on trips up there soon. But she doesn't plan on doing this forever. She wants to find people she can train to run Grass Roots and then retire to the mountains.

"I'm going to be a grandma in the mountains, maybe write a book," Rentas said. "I'm going to enjoy myself."







Upper Left: Three teenage volunteers demonstrate an improvisation game for the children.

Upper Right: Ms. Savannah, the knitting instructor for the afternoon, helps one of the children get started.

Middle Right: Innana Dabrev-McClain concentrates on her needle and yarn as she participates in her first knitting lesson.

Middle Left: Noah Parrot poses with a wooden cutout of himself.

Bottom Right: Many art pieces are on display at the Grass Roots Institute. Photos by Ashley Wilson.

New book unmasks Clarence Thomas

by George E. Curry

Anyone who has followed my career knows how I feel about **Clarence Thomas**. In fact, **Jack E. White**, writing in *Time* magazine, said, "No matter what **George Curry** accomplishes during the remainder of his journalistic career, he will be remembered for one thing: he was the editor who slapped a portrait of Clarence Thomas wearing an Aunt Jemima-style handkerchief on a 1993 cover of *Emerge* magazine."

White continued, "That shocking image outraged Thomas supporters, of course, but it crystallized the disgust that many African Americans had begun to feel about the ultra-conservative legal philosophy of the U.S. Supreme Court's only Black member."

Given my view of Thomas, I never thought I'd want to read a book on the supreme prick from Pinpoint, Ga. However, I resisted the urge and this week read *Supreme Discomfort: The Divided Soul of Clarence Thomas*. The only reason I read the book was because it was written by **Kevin Merida** and **Michael A. Fletcher**, two friends who work at the *Washington Post*. They have done a superb job describing the many contradictions of Clarence Thomas.

After reading the book, I have one regret about that famous *Emerge* cover. If I had an opportunity to do it over, I would tie the Aunt Jemima knot tighter.

While criticizing African-Americans for embracing "victimhood," the book portrays Thomas as the ultimate professional victim, at every turn claiming that people didn't like him because of his dark skin, his broad lips, or his conservative ideology. Recounting a 1998 speech before the National Bar Association, the authors note, "In remarks that veered from self-pity to combative, he maintained that the 'principal problem' he faces could be summed up in one succinct sentence: 'I have no right to think the way I do because I am Black.'"

As the late Appeals Court Justice **A. Leon Higginbotham** pointed out at the time, "He's got a right to think whatever he wants to, but he does not have a right to be free of critique."

And a critique of Thomas shows that while professing to oppose special treatment because of his race, every job he has held, includ-

Aida Rentas-

Champion of the Week

At 68, **Aida Rentas** has learned that a life of complacency and idleness is not the life for her. After retiring as a financial analyst some years ago, she determined that her free schedule would be filled with meaningful and purposeful work.

After moving to Atlanta in 1992, she joined a myriad of organizations and took on leadership roles in almost all of them. Having served for many years as the volunteer coordinator for the National Black Arts Council and outreach coordinator for The Names Project (The AIDS Memorial Quilt), she is currently the volunteer coordinator for Mayor **Shirley Franklin**.

But perhaps her greatest achievement is her most recent endeavor. The oldest of seven kids, Rentas always knew that working with children would give her great satisfaction. So in 2002, she founded the Grassroots Institute, a nonprofit organization located on Edgewood Ave. that is especially geared toward children of single parents. Rentas encourages these children to express themselves through art and creativity by providing programming in such areas as music, photography and jewelry making, to name a few.

Classes and programs are offered in the spring and summer, and every June, Rentas offers a one-week program free of charge to parents who can't afford the price of summer camp. The Grassroots Institute does not get public funding but rather relies on donations from businesses and people in the community. Rentas said she believes it is the responsibility of the community to support local programs.

In her spare time, Rentas enjoys reading and painting in the apartment she recently purchased right next to the organization. Though much of her free time is spent planning new programs for the kids, she doesn't mind devoting extra time and care, especially after getting feedback directly from the children.

"There is no greater feeling than when a child says 'I love you, thank you,'" Rentas said. "It makes me feel so good."

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Grass Roots Institute Celebrates Spring Break!

Art Workshop for Students at StudioPlex on Auburn Ave.

Dates: *April 9 & 10 2003 **Time:**10:00-11:30 **Cost:** Free

Where: StudioPlex 659 Auburn Ave. Suite G5 & G6

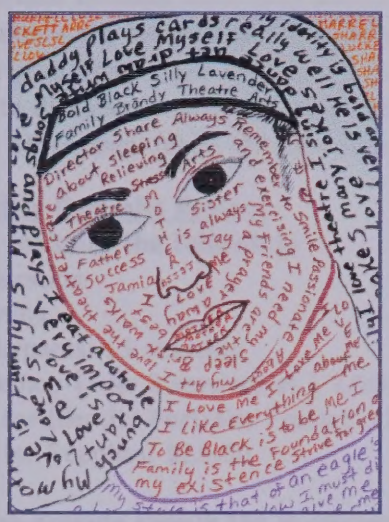
Contact: Aida to reserve your spot at **404-659-2929**

Artist and Educator Mishele Lesser Presents

A Program that Celebrates Diversity through Art

IDENTITY PORTRAITS:

WE ARE ALL WORKS OF ART



Identity Portraits Mishele Lesser © 1999

PROJECT INCLUDES:

- VISITING ARTIST
- MULTICULTURAL EDUCATOR
- HANDS ON ART PROJECT
- SELF-REFLECTIVE WRITING
- CROSS-CULTURAL LEARNING
- QCC OBJECTIVES
- RESOURCES

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

These self-portraits reflect students' unique identities on many levels. They capture their physical appearance, handwriting and self-concept expressed through their own words. Through the artistic process, students learn that all people are created with common facial proportions, yet we all are unique "works of art." Students are challenged to express themselves through drawing and writing and to discover new information about themselves and their peers. By learning about each other, they learn to value inner and outer beauty in all its diversity.

PERFECT FOR: 4th - 12th grade students

* Students need to attend both days to join workshop and to complete their portrait.

Contact: Aida, Director of The Grass Roots Institute at 404-659-2929
StudioPlex 659 Auburn Ave. Suite G5 & G6 Atlanta, GA 30312

THE multicultural
MATRIX
Contact: Mishele Lesser - t: 404.658.1023
e: mishele@multiculturalmatrix.com
INFUSE THE DIVERSITY OF LIFE INTO EDUCATION

CONTRACT

DATE: 4/1/03

CLIENT: Grass Roots Institute

JOB: Identity Portraits Project for Spring Break 2003
1st workshop 4/9/03 10:00 - 11:30 am
2nd workshop 4/10/03 10:00 - 11:30 am

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: These self-portraits reflect students' unique identities on many levels. They capture their physical appearance, handwriting and self-concept expressed through their own words. Through the artistic process, students learn that all people are created with common facial proportions, yet we all are unique "works of art." Students are challenged to express themselves through drawing and writing and to discover new information about themselves and their peers. By learning about each other, they learn to value inner and outer beauty in all its diversity.

Identity Portraits Project
Cost includes the following:
Preparation
Planning
Participants: 15 students
Workshop Time: 2 sessions of 1 1/2hrs - 3hrs total
Cost for Identity Portraits Project: $150
Cost for Supplies: $25.00

Please provide supply fee in advance of time of workshop by Friday 4/4/2003.

Payment Due: 4/19/03
Please Write Check to: Mishele Lesser
Please Send to: 659 Auburn Ave. Ste. 123 Atlanta, GA 30312

SIGNATURE OF INTENT AND PAYMENT AGREEMENT:

Grass Roots Institute Aida Rentas Date 4/3/2003

Multicultural Matrix Mishele Lesser Date 4/3/2003

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN TO: Mishele Lesser 659 Auburn Ave. Ste 123 Atlanta, GA 30312

Thank you for this opportunity,
Mishele Lesser
Director of The Multicultural Matrix
404-658-1023